JOHN ENGLISHMAN,

In Defence of the Engliſh Conſtitution.

Saturday, June 21, 1755. Number IX.

To John Engliſhman, *Eſq;*

SIR,

AS you began your Oppoſition to the *Watch-Tower* with Reluctance, and let the Public know how unſeaſonable you eſteemed private Diſputes, when the Country is alarmed with public Dangers, which demand the moſt ſerious Attention, and the utmoſt Unanimity, neceſſary to provide for the Security of the Country; ſo I am in no Doubt, but you will take the firſt Opportunity to drop the Diſpute, when you have ſufficiently guarded the Public againſt any further Impreſſions, to the Prejudice of our happy Conſtitution, from thoſe malevolent *Scribblers*, whoſe Careſſes are a Diſgrace to any Sect, and their implacable Malice againſt the Church of *England*, very glaring; but through their *Impotency*, incapable of producing any real Miſchief, further than rude and inſolent Affronts to the moſt honourable Characters, and an indecent Example to Perſons of lower Rank, of treating Superiors with Scurrility. Theſe are Faults repugnant to Decency and good Order in any Society, proceeding from a Baſeneſs of Nature, incurable by Reaſoning and Argumentations: And therefore, my Advice is, that you would ceaſe all further Attempts of that Kind, which cannot be conſtrued into a Neglect of the Public, after the Pains you have taken for their right Information, in every important Point wherein our Conſtitution has been attack'd.

And however the diſtorted Imaginations of thoſe Writers, joined to their inveterate Hatred of our national Conſtitution, may induce a ſtrong Perſuaſion in their Minds, that thoſe Proceedings are all of a very atrocious Nature, againſt which they endeavour with ſo much Pains to excite a popular Indignation; yet, to Gentlemen of Underſtanding, and whoſe Minds are unbiaſed by any Thing but Truth, eſpecially having well conſidered the ſeveral Vindications of the Church's Claim to an Eſtabliſhment in this Province, and thoſe Meaſures which have been taken upon that Suppoſition, every Thing appears in a quite different Light; and what is ſtigmatized with the moſt opprobrious Names by theſe hot-headed *Zealots*, is truly ſo different in Kind from their Repreſentations, as to merit the Applauſe and Approbation of thoſe who love their Country, and know that the promoting of God's true Religion, in the Ways of Peace and Holineſs, is a moſt apt Means to forward the Welfare and Proſperity of every Commonwealth.

All the *Watch-Tower*'s Clamour of Ill-Treatment and Perſecution, ariſes from his miſtaken Apprehenſion, that the religious Conſtitution of this Province, is an abſolute and intire Equality among all the different Profeſſions and Denominations of Religion, *Vid. Watch-Tower*, Numb. IV. This religious *Babel*, altho' it has no Exiſtence but in the Noddles of our *Proteſte-rians*, (ſo I call them, for true Proteſtants they are not) is the Foundation of all the *Watch-Tower*'s Arguments and Clamours about the College, Religion, Perſecution, Male-Practice of Governors, and fine-ſpun Obſervations, to evade the true Meaning of the ſeveral Laws of this Province for the Support of a Miniſtry: All their Clamours upon which Subjects, need no other Refutation than has already been given, by the Diſproofs of their darling fundamental Principle, often by them aſſerted, but never yet attempted to be proved, of the abſolute Equality ſubſiſting among all the different Sects and Perſuaſions of Religion. On the other Hand, I am perſuaded, that every impartial Man who has given Attention to the Management of this Diſpute, about our Conſtitution and the Eſtabliſhment of the Church of *England*, between the *Reflector* and *Watch-Tower* on one Side, and their ſeveral Oppoſers on the other Side, will be clearly of the Opinion, that the *Church of England* ſuffers a moſt unreaſonable *Perſecution*, from the *Watch-Tower* Writers, and their Adherents, even by their very Cry of Perſecution ſuffered by others; and has a Right to demand an intire Ceſſation of all Hoſtilities of this Kind, till *John Engliſhman* is better anſwered, than by ſuch Prevarications and Quibbles, for which the *Watch-Tower* has had ſo many public Challenges; and until this abſolute Equality can be proved to be the conſtitutional State of this Province.

This Point might have been argued to better Satisfaction, if the *Watch-Tower* had ſeen fit to continue the Dialogue between *C.* and *D.* which he was pleaſed to drop very ſuddenly, upon the Appearance of an Antagoniſt, who was willing, and ſtill is, to engage him at his own Weapons. Sufficient, however, has been offered by the Oppoſers of the *Watch-Tower*, to juſtify *this* Aſſertion, *viz. That the eſtabliſhed Religion of England, may be the eſtabliſhed Religion of this Province, notwithſtanding all that has been ſaid to the contrary.* And ſeeing we are apt to value ourſelves upon the Liberties and Privileges of *Engliſhmen*, becauſe born in an Engliſh Colony, we may, with the ſame Reaſon, claim the Honour and Advantage of the religious Conſtitution, *i. e.* to be Members of the Church of *England*, becauſe the Nation and Church are the very ſame Society: And if this ſhould be ſuppoſed, as with very good Reaſon it may, and another *Poſtulatum* granted, which cannot with the leaſt Colour of Reaſon be denied;

denied ; *viz. That the true Chriſtian Religion is taught and eſtabliſhed by the Church of England.* From theſe two *Poſtulata*, ſuch Corollaries will ariſe, as may be abundantly ſufficient to ſilence all the Noiſe and Clamour that has been raiſed againſt the public Meaſures which have been taken in Favour of the Church of England in this Province. At leaſt, then let the Clamour ceaſe, until it ſhall either appear that true Chriſtianity is not taught and eſtabliſhed in the Church of *England*, or that the ſame Religion, which is the eſtabliſhed Religion in *England*, is not the eſtabliſhed Religion in this Province, although it was a *Territory* belonging to *England* at the Time of the Union with *Scotland*.---Bare Affirmations and Negations will not be ſatisfactory, becauſe they are eaſily retorted with the ſame Vehemence.

The Public has been entertained with a Computation of the Expence the Province has been put to for ſupporting the Church of *England*; with an Innuendo, that ſo large a Sum had been laviſhed for uſeleſs Purpoſes. One might aſk this cavilling Calculator, how much larger Sums he could reckon to be expended in *Scotland*, for Support of their Kirk; nay, in *Boſton*, for the Maintenance of Independent Miniſters ? Or in *Connecticut*, for maintaining their Way of Religion among them ? That Religion is worth immenſe Sums of Money, is the Language of all polite Nations and People. What vaſt Sums did the Jewiſh Nation, by God's Appointment, expend upon their Religion; and what vaſt Sums have many Chriſtian Nations laid out this Way ? Whoever eſteemed ſuch Expences uſeleſs, beſides ſuch as have no Regard at all for Religion ? It would be no Wonder to hear an Atheiſt talk after the Manner of the *Watch-Tower*. The maintaining and preſerving God's true Religion, is a Means to preſerve the Preſence and Bleſſing of God, who is the Fountain of all Good ; ſo that every Thing that is dear and valuable to the Province, is ſecured by that Regard to God's true Religion, which none but *Atheiſts*, *Infidels*, and *Watch-Towers*, will profeſſedly ſet themſelves to oppoſe. But perhaps it will be ſaid, God's true Religion might be preſerved by the *Proteſterians*, at a leſs Expence : Let thoſe who think thus, only enquire in the neighbouring Colony of *Connecticut*, and they will find the Expence more than double. And may not we, with equal Truth and Charity, ſay, we would be glad to know what one Soul was ever ſaved by Means of all this Expence, that might not at leaſt, have as well been ſaved by preſerving the *Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, in the Communion of the Church of *England*; and indeed much better, if God's Religion be here eſtabliſhed in that Church ; for then all Oppoſitions to it muſt be ſinful and provoking to God ; and the more ſo, when proceeding, as it ſeems in theſe Writers, from inveterate Malice. It is to be hoped that, one Day or other, religious Diſſentions and Oppoſitions will ſubſide, (as they would, were it not for ſuch contentious Spirits) and the good People of this Province, with one Mouth, as well as one Heart, glorify God. But can we ever expect to ſee a Union and Coalition, except in the true Religion eſtabliſhed ? which Governors muſt countenance and encourage, and ſeveral have been very laudably zealous to promote and preſerve ; that thoſe of the Mother Country that are bred up in the Boſom of the Church, and come to ſettle here, may be accomodated ; and that the Wandring may have a Place of ſafe Reſort, when they ſee their Errors ; and thoſe who have been deluded, provided with Means for their Reclaiming. None will condemn Governor FLETCHER's Zeal, but thoſe who deny the above *Poſtulata :* And the *Watch-Tower* would never have made ſo many Flouriſhes in the Dedication of Mr. *M'Kimmie*'s Sufferings, if he had underſtood that thoſe two Gentlemen, out of a blind Zeal, had ſtraggled from their own Country, and come hither without any Call from God or Man, to ſow Seeds of Strife and Contention, and raiſe up Oppoſitions againſt God's true Religion here eſtabliſhed. Theſe and many other *Corollaries*, which I leave to the Reader's Invention, may be drawn from the above *Poſtulata*; which, as far as the Controverſy has proceeded between the *Watch-Tower* and his Antagoniſts, muſt be allowed to ſtand upon a good Baſis: Nor ſhall the *Watch-Tower*, with all his proud Hoſt of *Poteſterians*, ever be able to overthrow them.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c. R. R.

P. S. I perceive Mr. *Watch-Tower* intends to be as rude and abuſive as poſſible, flattering himſelf, I ſuppoſe, that he ſhall, by ſuch a Behaviour, put to Silence, all his Oppoſers ; but I truſt he will find himſelf much miſtaken. It is merry enough, to hear him calling others *Lunatic*, when it is plain his own Diſtraction, which appeared ſoon after he began to ſet up for a Writer, is at length got to ſuch a Pitch, as to fall little ſhort of downright *Raving* ; and calls for the Pity rather than the Reſentment of thoſe he abuſes.---We have a manifeſt Indication of this in the laſt *Mercury*, in his having the daring Aſſurance to make ſuch a wild *harum ſcarum* Bombaſt Addreſs to the Honourable Aſſembly, which is void of either Truth or good Manners, and betrays a Man almoſt frighted out of his Wits, with Shadows and groundleſs Terrors, of I know not what : Chains and Faggots contriving and preparing for him, when nobody dreams him the leaſt Harm. It may therefore perhaps be adviſeable, that his Friends ſhould ſhut him up a while in a dark Room, under a Courſe of proper Means, till he comes to himſelf : For my Part, I heartily pity and commiſerate him.

R. R.

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